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AUTHOR Bates, Richard
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ABSTRACT

The concept of instructional leadership is constrained by social conventions that derive from a technical notion devoted to managerial rather than educational ends. This paper analyzes (1) assumptions held about leadership and instruction, (2) these notions in other contexts and practices, and (3) effects of such practices on the lives of teachers. The notion of leadership is devoid of educational purpose because moral discourse has been abandoned for the technical discourse of managerialism, so that education is regarded as a production process. In the development of industrial capitalism, the most successful alternatives to owner control of the production process have been based upon bureaucratic systems of rule specification, incentives, and task evaluation. That schools were not matching production of knowledge with the wider society was presented as a managerial problem, to be solved by translating technical knowledge rapidly into the schools. The accompanying ideology has led to a deskilling of teachers' traditional craft and a reskilling in terms of managerial work, but with restrictions on responsible autonomy. A theory of education as a form of cultural politics will recover its essential social and moral basis. (CJH)

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INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL CONTROL: A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Richard Bates

Deakin University

Australia 3217

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Instructional Leadership and Educational Control:

A Cultural Perspective

INSTRUCTION, SUPERVISION AND THE LIVES OF TEACHERS

I have been asked to speak about the contribution critical theory might make to the study of Instructional Leadership. What I have to say is far from a fully worked out approach to the issue. Indeed, what follows is but a sketch of what such an analysis might look like. However, there do seem to be a number of themes which might be worth pursuing.

One of the fundamental premises of critical theory is that ideas and pra:tices can best be understood within the socio-historical context of their use. That is, how people think and act is in large measure constructed by the historical residues and the social necessities they have inherited. This being so, the first thing to do in looking at the notion of Instructional Leadership is to examine the social conventions which constrain our understanding of the topic and to attempt to assess how such conventions might influence our practice.

In order to do this I would first like to direct attention to our construction of the notion of Leadership in educational administration and to the notion of Instruction. Following this I would like to place such notions within the context of more widespread social practices in other institutional contexts. Third, I would like to make some comments on the variety of effects of such practice on the lives of teachers. Finally, I would like to comment on the understanding of leadership which emerges from an understanding of education as a form of cultural politics rather than as a process of technical production.

LEADERSHIP

The notion of leadership that informs discourse in educational administration is curiously devoid of any notion of educational purpose. Since the nineteen sixties when the current definitions of educational administration were theorised on the basis of functionalist sociology and behaviouristic psychology, schools of educational administration and leadership have largely abandoned the moral discourse of educational purpose and opted for the technical discourse of bureaucratic rationality (Bates, 1980; Rizvi, 1986). As an examination of any contemporary text in educational administration shows, the preoccupations of those responsible for the formal training of principals and superintendents are with such notions as management, organisation, authority, motivation, job-satisfaction, decision-making, implementation, communication, coordination, supervision, evaluation, accountability. Not one of the fundamental concepts which are used to theorise the practice of educational administration is an educational concept. What, we might ask, does such a theoretical universe imply for our construction of the notion of Instructional Leadership?

Fairly clearly, restricting our discourse to such a theoretical universe precludes our thinking of Instructional Leadership (or any other kind of leadership in schools) in educational terms. If the discourse of educational administrators has been constructed so as to preclude the consideration of moral and cultural purpose in education then the only available conception is a technical one. We should not, therefore, be surprised that those hundreds of studies of principal behaviour inspired by Mintzberg and his colleagues show that principals have little concern with educational matters and seem almost to be incapable of taking part in educational (as opposed to managerial) forms of discourse.

If the discourse of leadership has been dominated by the language of managerialism, of bureaucratic rationality, then so has the practice of

educational administrators. They have been constantly urged to emulate the 'successful' practices of business and industry. Despite Dewey's warnings (Dewey, 1910) and Callahan's documentation (Callahan, 1960) of the pernicious and destructive consequences of transferring the cult of efficiency from the arena of industrial production to the arena of cultural politics, the cult of bureaucratic rationality has had a pervasive impact on education. Indeed notions of managerialism are ubiquitous among educational administrators largely because the academics whose work has formed the theoretical discourse of the field since the beginnings of the theory movement, seem to have suffered a massive social and historical amnesia regarding the cultural purposes of education.

INSTRUCTION

If the notion of leadership that informs the discourse of educational administrators is a managerial notion derived from the world of material (industrial) production, then what of the notion of instruction? This also, has been characterised by a placement within the discourse of managerialism. If education is conceived as a production process rather than as a form of cultural politics then the notion of instruction employed can be expected to follow a logic similar to that of industry. That is, conception and execution will be separated (Braverman, 1974), tasks will be ordered sequentially and hierachically, become separated in time and place, and the logic of their relations will be invisible to most of those engaged in the labour of production. As Berger, Berger and Kellner have suggested, the logic of the production process, when allied with bureaucratic rationality, produces a form of consciousness which separates means from ends, purposes for action, values from behaviour (Berger, Berger & Kellner, 1973). Wake (1979) has shown the effects of this form of logic on the structures and processes of schooling.

The notion of instruction involved in ideas of instructional leadership is, then, one associated directly with notion of production. Through such a

notion the substance of education can be decontextualised; the conception of ends divorced from the execution of means; the sequences and hierarchies of activity can be presented in ways which depoliticise the activities of pupils and teachers alike, presenting education as an activity that was politically and culturally neutral. Through the notion of 'instruction' education can be stripped of its symbolic, cultural significance. The complex, cultural substance of education can be stripped to the fundamentals of the naked curriculum. Cultural ideals and the conflicts between them can be displaced by emphasis on production of the technical skills of 'the basics'. Successful instruction can be defined in terms of technical efficiency in producing in pupils a mastery, not of ideas and action, but of unrelated skills.

The notion of Instructional Leadership depends upon the social construction of Leadership as a form of managerialism and of instruction as a production process. Neither definition is in any way justified by recourse to a form of <u>educational</u> discourse, but is derived from notions originating outside the arenas of educational theorising. The major sources of such ideas can be traced to the development of managerial techniques of behavioural control of workers and to changes in the organisation of the production process with the development of advanced capitalism. While Braudel (1982) has shown that such changes have their roots in a form of market capitalism stretching back into the medieval period, most of the changes with which we are concerned occurred in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

We are only recently beginning to understand the nature and extent of the transformation of everyday life produced by these changes. Several accounts of the alterations in the forms of social control of the labour process have been produced. Perhaps the most original account is that provided by Braverman (1974) who suggested that the development of industrial capitalism was based not so much on technical advances in production methods, but rather, upon alterations in the management practices which removed control of the

production process from the hands of artisans and relocated it in the hands of owners. Simultaneous with this process was the deskilling of the workers.

Friedman (1977) has elaborated Braverman's analysis to argue that resistance to the separation of conception from execution and the accompanying managerial strategies of deskilling and increased control brought about alterations in the strategies of managers. In particular, management devised techniques which maintained managerial control but granted workers limited forms of responsible autonomy. In the early period of capitalism this was a legacy of the craft unions but under later capitalist forms responsible autonomy was a self conscious managerial strategy designed to preempt worker resistance. It can readily be seen that such a conception is applicable to the work of teachers.

Edwards (1979) presents a further reconstruction of Braverman's thesis, suggesting that three successive forms of worker control have emerged in the development of advanced capitalism: simple, technical and bureaucratic. Simple control is characteristic of small firms operating in a competitive market where management exercised arbitrary, personalised forms of domination of workers. This form of control characterises much of the nineteenth century. During the early period of the twentieth century the growth in the size of firms made such techniques of control ineffectual, leading to a number of experiments with alternative forms of control. After many unsuccessful strategies management devised systems of technical control which incorporated control into the technology of the production process. This form of control is epitomized by the assembly line. Worker resistance to such forms of control, especially following World War Two led to further attempts to develop alternative strategies of control. Generally, the most successful of these alternatives have been based upon bureaucratic systems of rule specification, incentives and sanctions, related through mechanisms of continuous work task evaluation. Finally, then, the form of control abstracted by Weber from his

analysis of government, and by Foucault in his analysis of prisons and schools has become the paradigm of control of the production process.

Burawoy (1983) has extended these analyses further by suggesting the need to distinguish between 'the labour process conceived of as a particular organization of tasks and the political apparatuses of production conceived as its mode of regulation' (Burawoy, 1984 p.589). Such a distinction is convenient for our discussion as it parallels the distinction between Instruction (that is the praticular organisation of tasks of production) and Leadership (the political apparatus of regulation). I shall come back to this issue later, but would now like to turn our attention to the forms of control historically employed in mass education systems.

THE FRAMEWORK OF CONTROL

My original formulation of this issue in education was based upon two analyses. The first was concerned with the increasingly symbiotic relationship between professional and bureaucratic structures of control in education and elsewhere (Bates, 1980a). The second, more elaborate attempt was to produce a periodization of the forms of control in education corresponding to the technical forms of supervision available to managers. This thesis (Bates, 1980b) suggested that administration in education could usefully be conceived as a system of social control and that 'the bases of such control, initially bureaucratic, have shifted through procedures of psychological control towards techniques of ideological control' (1980b p.47). That is, three periods of managerial control were hypothesised in education. The first, (Bureaucratic) phase corresponded with the early period of the establishment of mass education. Unlike the transformation of production in industry which brought about the destruction of craft unions and the deskilling of artisans, mass education systems created a new class of worker - the teacher. For the most part the teachers created by the mass education system were largely unskilled already.

In Australia the situation may have been somewhat extreme but was not entirely atypical of other systems elsewhere. As one contemporary observer described the early Australian teachers, they were apparently

> with very rare exceptions, vulgar, illiterate, sottish adventurers; the refuse and insolvent outcasts of some trade or mechanical occupation ... persons of the most worthless character who had formerly been convicts and who were notorious drunkards. (Smart, 1977 p.7).

The difficulty facing the developers of mass education was how to produce a moral transformation in the children of the working class through means of such a degenerate teaching population. The ideal was, as Johnson suggests, a romantic one.

> Supervised by its trusty teacher, surrounded by its playground wall, the school was to raise a new race of working people - respectful, cheerful, hardworking, loyal, pacific and religious. (1970 p.119)

The only option available to the managers of such systems was the production of an essentially bureaucratic system for the control of teacher, and thereby of pupil, behaviour. Indeed, what developed was

> an elaborate system of task-specification, standardised, graded and ordered in terms of content, and an equally elaborate and standardised system of behavioural control kept in place by routine and standaridsed inspection and reinforced by rewards and punishments such as payment by results promotion and mismissal. (Bates, 1980a p.51).

The virtue of such a system was that

> It allowed the mass socialisation of children into the norms of industry, docility and obediance through the processes of control exercised over the behaviour, pedagogy and knowledge employed by teachers. (Bates, 1980a p.52).

Such systems of control have been argued by Beeby (1966) to be characteristic of the early stages of development of most mass systems of education. Such systems of control clearly exhibit both of Burawoy's characteristics: a specific form of production in the organisation of tasks and an accompanying political apparatus of regulation.

FROM BUREAUCRATIC TO PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL

The early decades of the twentieth century saw a shift in the basis of control in mass education systems from a purely bureaucratic form towards techniques of psychological control based on the testing movement. The advent of scientific psychological tests allowed the development of more subtle forms of control in schools. They were accompanied by a new variety of ideas about ability and talent which legitimated the aspirations of an increasingly organised and militant body of teachers and administrators. The identification of differences in talent and ability through such means appeared to offer a scientific basis for the formulation of educational practice and logically required a rejection of the standardised and uniform techniques of task specification and managerial control currently in place. They produced the grounds for both teacher resistance and for shifts in managerial techniques of control of the educational process.

What eventuated over the first half of the twentieth century was a form of both technical and political control of education which allowed a degree of 'responsible autonomy' to teachers but which also was capable of evaluating teacher performance in new ways and, most importantly, provided a technology which replace direct forms of control with indirect forms of control of both teachers and pupils.

> A precarious system of moral control was supplanted by a scientific means of psychological control which determined the eventual life chances of children ... new techniques of indirect control (through ... testing and classification) were added to the direct forms of control through inspection, and assessment. (Bates, 1980b p.53)

The availability of such new techniques of control of production and politics coincided with a massive expansion of education systems (indeed they may have made such expansion possible). It is important, therefore, to see the historical emergence of the monstrous army of psychologometricians as an important stage in the development of indirect and powerful techniques of both behavioural and social control.

FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL TO IDEOLOGICAL CONTROL

One of the major claims of the psychological controllers was that they could scientifically identify talent of various kinds and assist in its allocation to appropriate occupational (and therefore social and economic) destinies. The impossibility of doing so on a just and equitable basis, free of cultural and class biases became increasingly apparent during the sixties and seventies, resulting in a collapse of the moral justification of such practices. (But not, it must be acknowledged, any major decline in the utilization of such techniques of control, which are, it must be admitted, administratively convenient, even though morally and educationally indefensible).

More important than the collapse of the ethical justification for the use of culturally and socially discriminatory practices of psychological control was a widespread notion that schools were not keeping up with the rates of change in the production and utilization of knowledge in the wider society. During several decades of the post war period western societies have been rife with accusations that educational practice is anachronistic. The problem has been presented as a managerial problem of ensuring the new and productive technical knowledge developed in centres of research and development is translated as rapidly as possible into the work of schools.

Techniques of bureaucratic or psychological control have appeared to be inappropriate to such demands. They simply do not produce sufficiently rapid

transformations. As a result, a third form of control has been instituted - Ideological control. As I have suggested elsewhere

> The form of such ideological control is now well established. Initially, massive funding provides an institutional base for the development of a new curriculum. A group of curriculum experts is brought together and initial materials are produced. These are 'trialled' with teachers ... The effectiveness of the materials and program is evaluated and modifications are made ... The materials are packaged, usually in multi-media form, and a large scale marketing exercise is undertaken, involving mass-media, teacher journals, teacher-training institutions, local authorities short course and scholarship training opportunities. Thus the curricular materials and the pedagogy they demand are sold to the profession.
>
> Through such techniques the culture of the teaching profession is reshaped ideologically. The important point about such developments is that their form provides both a more rapid and surer way of influencing teacher practice. This is because of the persuasive nature of the control processes being used. Rather than direction and supervision, a subtler 'band wagon' effect is created which defines what 'good teaching' is about, and creates divisions within the teaching population between those who know about and employ the new curricular technique and those who do not. Status is therefore redefined in terms which are ideologically produced and manipulated. (Bates, 1980b p.55)

The effect of ideological forms of control is, once again, to support and extend administrative techniques of control through the specification of both a technology of production and an associated form of political regulation. Again, while greater responsible autonomy is promised, its parameters are clearly delimited and involve a further deskilling of teachers in terms of their traditional 'craft' and a reskilling in terms of managerial work (see Apple, 1979).

None of these forms of control is mutually exclusive. They exist side by side and are more or less influential in various schools and systems. They are contested in various ways and managers, teachers and pupils modify their practices during negotiations over conflicts. As the historical conditions of the schools alter as a result of changing social conditions the balance and emphasis on various techniques of technical and managerial control alter. It

is, for instance possible to detect pressures towards the reestablishment of bureaucratic forms of control in the current period when the decline in the status and rewards of teaching and an increase in the power of managers where there is an oversupply of teachers combined with declining rolls is evident. (Ball and Goodson, 1985)

If the periodisation and mix of these techniques of managerial control is somewhat ambiguous, the existence of such forms is not. The question therefore, is what influence such forms of control have on the practice of instructional leadership.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE LIVES OF TEACHERS

If Instructional Leadership is contextualised within the analysis of forms of social control practised in and on schools, then it is quite possible to see it as an interpretive practice which links various forms of social control with the lives of teachers and children. It is my contention that it does so largely through the control of the three fundamental message systems of schools: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. Moreover, as the evaluation system has been subjected to external forms of psychological control and the curriculum system to outside forms of ideological control and as mandated outcomes have increasingly been specified in these areas it seems likely that current transformations in control designed to 'improve' the work of schools will focus on the pedagogical message systems of schools. Smyth (1984, 1986) in his excellent analyses of the practices and effects of clinical supervision has already suggested the increasing importance of the supervision of pedagogy as a control technique. It seems likely that the renewed interest in Instructional Leadership noted by Dornoyer (1986) is also indicative of a focussing of interest on the least controlled of the schools message systems.

What teachers may well be experiencing as interest in their pedagogy increases is an intensification of pressure to conform with particular

instructional models which are determined by researchers as 'more effective'. Principals and Instructional Leaders of various kinds are likely to be subject to increasing barrages of information on "successful" instructional techniques and be urged to ensure their adoption by teachers. Systems of sanctions and rewards (incentive systems) will be introduced to reinforce the adoption of the new techniques and to engineer a political apparatus of regulation which will parallel the particular organisation of the tasks of educational production specified by the experts.

Such developments are likely to lead both to an increasing emphasis on the logic of bureaucratic rationality (Rizvi, 1986) and to further restrictions on the responsible autonomy of the teaching profession. It may well lead to further development of what Webb (1985) calls status panic among teachers. Moreover, such developments are certain, in my view, to further develop a technical notion of educational practice which is devoted to managerial rather than educational ends.

What, one might ask, is the alternative? That is the subject of another paper - but the core of that alternative is the attempt to theorise and practice a form of schooling situated within the notion of education as a form of cultural politics. This is fundamental to the recovery of the notion of education as a social and moral activity and its release from the burden of technical forms of managerialism which reduce education the forcible imposition of a naked curriculum devoid of purpose and detached from the cultural purposes of teachers and pupils. This is not a rhetorical observation inspired by a particular ideological position. Rather it is a reaction to the empirical observation that, despite our worst efforts

> Children's and teacher's parent cultures inure them to and activate them for the conflict they encounter in the schools; and the social relations of schooling inure pupils and teachers to and activate them for the conflictual social relations they encounter elsewhere. Schooling cannot be conceptually snapped off from the social totality. The school is a conflictual web of inter-relationships and this is part and parcel of the conflictual web characterizing the ensemble of social relations within capitalism. (Riseborough, 1985 p.261)

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